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Third Review Conference of the States Parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction

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Exchange of views on a political declaration to be adopted at the Third Review Conference

Draft Declaration of the States Parties to the Convention on the prohibition of the use, stockpiling, production and transfer of anti-personnel mines and on their destruction

Submitted by the President-Designate of the Third Review Conference

Fifteen years have passed since we first gathered

1. Fifteen years have passed since the international community first gathered in Maputo to begin the historic effort to fulfil the promise made by the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction. Both proud of our accomplishments and mindful of what work remains, we have returned to this once mine-ravaged country, committed to complete the task of ending the suffering and casualties caused by anti-personnel mines, for all people for all time.

2. In the 1990s the world was faced with a global humanitarian crisis. Landmines were claiming thousands of lives and limbs every month, prolonging conflict and insecurity, hindering refugee return, and impeding development. In response, states, civil society and international organizations came together in a unique partnership to ban anti-personnel landmines and to end this crisis. This unprecedented process, initiated by non-governmental organizations and the International Committee of the Red Cross, and involving mine-affected and other States from all regions of the world, resulted in the adoption of the Convention. For the first time, a conventional weapon in widespread use was banned and the needs of victims of the weapon in question were taken into account.

Tremendous progress has been made, but more needs to be done

3. In May of 1999, there were but 45 parties to the Convention and Mozambique was only one of 18 States in Africa that had committed to this movement. There are now 161 States that are bound by this Convention and there is virtually universal acceptance of the

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Convention in Africa. It is now well understood by both world leaders and ordinary people everywhere that mine use is an unacceptable behaviour in the modern world. However, the ongoing use of anti-personnel mines by a small number of actors is a matter of deep concern. As well, over 30 States still remain outside of the Convention and have yet to renounce the weapon and formally join our cause. For these reasons, we will not tire from continuing to promote observance of this norm.

4. When we first gathered in Maputo, the clearance of all mined areas was a distant prospect and perhaps, to some, unachievable. Today, almost 30 States have completed this effort. Our successes to date give hope to the almost equal number of States that are still in the process of freeing land from its deadly bondage. We remain deeply concerned, however, that emplaced mines still continue to cause death and suffering in many countries around the world and we remain acutely aware that our efforts to demine must be carried out in the most efficient and expedient manner. As women, girls, boys and men remain at risk, we will continue to proceed apace to achieve our goal.

5. While much time has since passed since we first gathered in Maputo, our solemn promise to mine victims has remained foremost in our minds. Unlike the destruction of emplaced or stockpiled mines, efforts to fulfil this promise must continue for years. In Maputo in 1999 the international community first expressed that a comprehensive approach to victim assistance is required with our efforts being part of broader approaches to health care, rehabilitation, human rights and other domains. While the Convention has made a difference, we are very much aware that our promise to mine victims has not yet been fulfilled. Moving forward, acting on our awareness that do not exist in a world unto itself will help ensure further progress towards our ultimate aim of the full and effective participation of mine victims in their societies on an equal basis to others.

Fuelled by partnerships, the Convention has become the benchmark for multilateralism working the way it should

6. In Maputo in 1999, we established the Convention as the international community's framework for mine action and created innovative mechanisms to address circumstances specific to that time. Moreover, international humanitarian law protecting civilians in conflict has been significantly strengthened through the force of the Convention. Returning to where international efforts to implement to the Convention all began, we are committed to maintain the vitality of the Convention. We embrace the opportunity to change in order to meet the challenges of this day and to adapt to address challenges yet unimagined. The Convention has become the benchmark for multilateralism working the way it should and our ability to innovate will ensure that this remains the case in the years ahead.

7. The Convention itself and what has been achieved in its application are the combined result of national ownership and international cooperation. As sovereign States, we are well aware that, individually, we are responsible for compliance with, and the implementation of, the Convention in all areas under our jurisdiction or control. As a community of States which have made this commitment, we are equally well aware that ending the suffering and casualties cause by anti-personnel mines can only be achieved through partnerships, including those between affected and other States, international organisations and civil society. Fifteen years after our first high-level gathering in Maputo, it is clearer than ever that a spirit of cooperation must prevail to overcome remaining challenges.

We are committed to comply and complete

8. The sense of optimism prevalent in Maputo in 1999 has been matched by the reality that ending the era of anti-personnel mines is indeed possible. We aspire to do this within a decade, with our ambition being to maintain strict observance of the Convention's norms, to complete implementation of our time-bound obligations by 2025, to ensure that by that time there are no new mine victims in areas under their jurisdiction or control, and to see that survivors participate in their societies on an equal basis with others. Having returned to one of the birthplaces of the anti-landmines movement, we are committed realise this ambition, with our efforts during the period 2014 to 2019 guided by the Maputo Action Plan.:

- We will fulfil our obligations to destroy all stockpiled anti-personnel mines and clear all mined areas as soon as possible, mindful that the Convention implies that partnerships shall be central for completion of these tasks.
- We will ensure compliance with the Convention's comprehensive prohibitions on the use, stockpiling, production and transfer of anti-personnel mines, working together in a renewed spirit of cooperation to facilitate compliance by one another with our obligations under this Convention.
- We will condemn the use of anti-personnel mines by any actor, including by armed non-state actors, we will work to prevent any future use, and we will appeal to the world to join us in this movement.
- We will make further advancements towards the fulfilment of the aim of the full and effective participation of mine victims in their societies on an equal basis to others.
- We will ensure that our efforts involve young and old, women and men, girls and boys, and reflect their views. The dignity and well-being of survivors, their families and communities will be at the core of our efforts.
- We will strengthen national ownership, enhance cooperation, and establish partnerships for completion.
- We commit to stay focused and spare no efforts until the main object and purpose of the Convention are fully materialised.
- We will succeed in putting an end to the suffering and casualties caused by anti-personnel mines.